Philosophy 565: Philosophy of Language
Fall 2008 Syllabus
Prof. Clare Batty

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Office Hours: Tues. 9:00 – 10:30, Wed. 1:00 – 2:30, or by appointment

Prerequisites
None. But you must be prepared to engage with some difficult contemporary material.

Course Description
This is an upper-level introductory course in the philosophy of language. We will first examine views on the nature of meaning, reference, truth and the relationships between them. After this, we will turn to questions about the relationship between language and the acts we perform through its use. Along the way, we will consider the ways in which meanings play a role in thought and, more generally, in our interactions with the world. Among the philosophers we will study are Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, W. V. O. Quine, Donald Davidson, Saul Kripke, H. P. Grice and Hilary Putnam.

Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course, a student should be able to do the following:

- explain different contemporary issues and views in the philosophy of language;
- analyze and critically evaluate the arguments for these positions; and
- construct clear philosophical prose that addresses these issues.

Required Readings
I have ordered both for the bookstores and placed copies of each on reserve in Young Library. Lycan is also available as an E-book through UK Libraries.

I have also indicated some recommended reading. If an article is available online, I have given you the URL. If not available online, it will be available to you in Young Reserves.

Reading Assignments
Reading, discussing and writing about the assigned readings are the central activities of this class. There is a reading assignment for each week, typically a chapter of Lycan and a paper or two from the anthology. Your careful preparation of the readings is crucial. The readings in both anthologies are often very difficult: expect to read everything at least twice. They require close study, and you should not put them off until the last minute. If you have trouble understanding what an author says, or any other question concerning the course, please do not hesitate to ask.

Requirements
2 papers (7-8 pages): 30% each (60%)
Final exam: 20%

Class participation: 20% (Evaluation will be based on attendance, preparation, contribution to discussion and submission of readings questions prior to each week’s lectures—see below.)

Lateness policy: It is disruptive to class when students come in late. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be marked as ‘absent’—although you may stay as long as you take a seat close to the door.

Guidelines for reading questions: This short assignment is due every Monday by 8pm (STRICTLY ENFORCED). You must submit a question (or two) to exhibit that you have done the reading and that you have thought about the material enough to have some kind of response to it. It can be an ‘I don’t understand’ question; but it must be an informed ‘I don’t understand’ question. It must diagnose why you are confused, not
just *that* you are confused. The point of these exercises is for you to develop the ability to ask good questions. That sounds easy, but it is not. And the ability to ask good, hard questions is central to the philosophical enterprise. Please be aware that I will notice if your questions consistently deal with the beginning sections of the assigned articles. **Questions MUST be submitted via the form on the course website ([www.clarebatty.com](http://www.clarebatty.com)).**

**Policy on Late Assignments**

Papers handed in late will be penalized by the equivalent of one grade point per calendar day, unless you can document a medical or other valid reason for why your assignment is late. If you turn an assignment in late, you must give it to me in person or e-mail it to me.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Plagiarism means taking the words and thoughts of others (their ideas, concepts, images, sentences, and so forth) and using them as if they were your own, without crediting the author or citing the source. Other forms of academic dishonesty include: cheating on exams, double submission of papers, aiding dishonesty, and falsification of records. If in doubt about what counts as plagiarism, or about how to properly reference a source, consult me. At this and most other universities, plagiarism is taken very seriously and will be punished in accordance with the UK Policy on Disposition of Academic Offenses. If you are tempted to plagiarize because you are in crisis, it is always better to speak to your professor, your advisor, the counseling center, or another trusted authority on campus who can help you handle the crisis.

For more information on plagiarism, and how to avoid it, see:

http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/Plagiarism.pdf
http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_understand_plagiarism_1/0,6622,427064,-00.html

For a statement on UK’s Policy on Disposition of Academic Offenses, see:

http://www.chem.uky.edu/research/grossman/acadoffenses/new_policy.pdf

**Getting Help**

I am here to help you. Feel free to email me with any questions about the material or the assignments, or come and visit me during office hours. You may also make an appointment with me outside of office hours.

**Web Resources**

See Jim Pryor’s Guidelines on reading and writing philosophy papers:

http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html
http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html.

Useful glossaries are Jim Pryor’s Philosophical Terms and Methods:


**Classroom and Learning Accommodations**

Any student with a disability who is taking this course and needs classroom or exam accommodations should contact the Disability Resource Center, 257-2754, room 2 Alumni Gym, jkarnes@uky.edu.
Tentative Schedule

Handouts for discussion will be distributed and then posted online. This schedule is tentative. We will alter it if need be.

WEEK 1 (Aug. 28)
Introduction and Preliminaries
No readings

WEEK 2 (Sept. 2, 4)
Reference and Referring: Definite Descriptions
Readings: Lycan ch. 1 “Introduction” and ch. 2 “Definite Descriptions"
Frege, “On Sense and Reference” (AN)
Russell, “On Denoting” (AN)

WEEK 3 (Sept. 9, 11)
Reference and Referring: Definite Descriptions cont’d
Readings: Strawson, “On Referring” (AN)
Russell, “Mr. Strawson on Referring” (AN)

WEEK 4 (Sept. 16, 18)
Reference and Referring: Definite Descriptions cont’d
Readings: Donnellan, “Proper Names and Identifying Descriptions” (AN)
FIRST PAPER TOPICS HANDED OUT THURSDAY SEPT. 18

WEEK 5 (Sept. 23, 25)
Reference and Referring: Proper Names, The Description Theory
Readings: Lycan ch. 3 “Proper Names: The Description Theory”
Kripke, “Naming and Necessity” (AN)

WEEK 6 (Sept. 30, Oct. 2)
Reference and Referring: Proper Names, Direct Reference and the Causal-Historical Theory
Readings: Lycan ch. 4 “Proper Names: Direct Reference and the Causal-Historical Theory”
Evans, “The Causal Theory of Names” (AN)

WEEK 7 (Oct. 7, 9)
Reference and Referring: Proper Names, Direct Reference and the Causal-Historical Theory cont’d
Readings: Putnam, “Meaning and Reference” (AN)
FIRST PAPER DUE THURSDAY OCT. 9

WEEK 8 (Oct. 14, 16)
Meaning: Traditional Theories & “Use” Theories
Readings: Lycan, ch. 5 “Traditional Theories of Meaning” and ch. 6 “Use” Theories
Locke, “On Words”
Frege, “The Thought: A Logical Inquiry” (AN)

WEEK 9 (Oct. 21, 23)
Meaning: Psychological Theories, Grice’s Program
Readings: Lycan, ch. 7 “Psychological Theories, Grice’s Program “
Grice, “Meaning” (AN)
Grice, “Utterer’s Meaning, Sentence-Meaning, and Word Meaning” in his Studies in the Way of Words (Young Reserves)
WEEK 10 (Oct. 28, Nov. 30)
Meaning: Verificationism
Readings: Lycan, ch. 8 “Verificationism”
Quine, “Translation and Meaning” (AN)
Recommended: Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” (AN)

WEEK 11 (Nov. 6)
Meaning: Truth-Condition Theories, Davidson’s Program
Readings: Lycan, ch. 8 “Truth-Condition Theories, Davidson’s Program”
Davidson, “Truth and Meaning” (AN)

WEEK 12 (Nov. 11, 13)
Meaning: Truth-Condition Theories, Davidson’s Program
Readings: Davidson, “Truth and Meaning” (AN)
SECOND PAPER TOPICS HANDED OUT THURSDAY NOV. 13

WEEK 13 (Nov. 18, 20)
Pragmatics and Speech Acts: Speech Acts and Illocutionary Force
Readings: Lycan, ch. 12 “Speech Acts and Illocutionary Force”
Austin, “Performatives Utterances” (AN)
Searle, “A Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts” (AN)

WEEK 14 (Nov. 25)
Pragmatics and Speech Acts: Implicative Relations
Readings: Lycan, ch. 13 “Implicative Relations”
Grice, “Logic and Conversation” (AN)
Searle, “Indirect Speech Acts” (AN)
Recommended: Grice, “Further Notes on Logic and Conversation” in his Studies in the Way of Words (Young Reserves)

WEEK 15 (Dec. 2, 4)
Pragmatics and Speech Acts: Implicative Relations
Readings: Grice, “Logic and Conversation” (AN)
Searle, “Indirect Speech Acts” (AN)
SECOND PAPER DUE THURSDAY DEC. 4

WEEK 16 (Dec. 9, 12)
The Dark Side: Metaphor
Readings: Lycan, ch. 14 “Metaphor”
Davidson, “What Metaphors Mean” (AN)